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AUTHOR Hale, Janice
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ABSTRACT

Debate about the relative influence of class and of race on the condition of blacks in the United States is relevant to the issue of the educational achievement of black youth. Neither race nor class, but culture is most likely to affect black children's behavior in schools and, as well, the school's response to black children. The emphasis blacks place on emotional expression, their orientation toward people rather than objects, reliance on interpersonal relationships, proficiency in nonverbal communication, utilization of a relational cognitive style as opposed to an analytic cognitive style, and encouragement of expressiveness, spontaneity and assertiveness all contrast with typical behavior of whites and contradict standard expectations for conduct in educational settings. Additionally, the speech of blacks differs in many ways from the speech of whites and the language practices of the schools. Black children are more active and have more physical energy to expend than white children. Finally, the black home environment, one that provides abundant, intense and varied stimulation that may lead to a chronic, higher activation level, differs markedly from the typical classroom environment. More research is needed in order to facilitate coordination of the culture of the black home and the culture of the school. (Author/RH)

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A MATTER OF CULTURE: THE EDUCATIVE STYLES OF AFRO-AMERICAN CHILDREN

Janice Hale
Yale University

Black leaders are preoccupied with racial bias as the sole cause of ghetto poverty -- an approach that ignores growing divisions within the Black community

-- Carl Gershman

White Americans are at best ambivalent in their commitment to racial equality. The sufferings of the Black ghetto can be laid directly at the door of racial oppression.

-- Kenneth Clark

The two quotations above were the captions for a debate in the New York Times Magazine published on October 5, 1980. Carl Gershman, a white man who is vice chairman of the Social Democrats, U.S.A. wrote an article entitled: "A Matter of Class". Dr. Kenneth Clark, a Black psychologist wrote an article entitled: "The Role of Race." The cover of the magazine summarized the debate as one over the plight of Black Americans. However, it is only after ignoring the titles, ignoring the captions, ignoring the pictures and re-reading both articles twice that one realizes that it is a debate over affirmative action.

Gershman argues that because of the progress of the Black middle class, there is a class schism in the Black community -- between the middle-class and what he calls the underclass. He directly and indirectly blames the Black middle-class for this schism. He bemoans the growth and expansion of a Black underclass which he says is not being benefitted by affirmative action programs. He accuses Black leaders of minimizing the efforts of governmental assistance and asserting their right to raise the issues and oversee the solutions. He decrys the "articulate Black intelligentsia" who raise the issues

for the Black "little man". He charges that the Black middle-class translates the problems of the ghetto into professional jobs for themselves.

Clark asserts that racial inequality in America is caused by white racism. He agrees that there is a class schism in the Black community and that the condition of the underclass has worsened. However, in contrast to Gershman, he argues that the schism is caused by white racism. Clark correctly points out that this racist society selectively 'processes' middle-class and underclass Blacks so that racism is more stark and devestating as it affects the underclass. However, it still effectively alters the quality of life (compared to whites) for all Black people. The purposes and results of this racism are more consonant with the goals of white society than with the goals of the Black middle-class as Gershman would have us believe. (Blaming the victim?)

Gershman sets forth a so0histicated argument against affirmative action. He begins by lamenting the plight of the Black underclass. Then he asserts that social efforts should be directed toward the underclass not the middle-class who presently benefit from affirmative action (food stamps, not professional jobs). The thrust of his argument is an attack on Black leaders for not "arousing the nation's attention" to the plight of the suffering Black masses. At no point does Gershman (the white spokesman for the Black masses) outline a plan or program. He does however praise the solutions of Lyndon Johnson and D. Patrick Moynihan. He describes the valient efforts of the federal government to aid the underclass and depicts the Black middle-class leaders as denigrating those efforts and preserving the ghetto for their own benefit.

Dr. Clark correctly exposes Gershman's sentiments as those belonging to the former allies of the civil rights movement -- white, northern liberals. White liberals were in the vanguard of the civil rights movement when it was southern based and when the issue was drinking from a water fountain and eating at a lunch counter. These same liberals have turned, according to Clark, into neo-conservatives now that the Black liberation struggle is northern based and the issue is that Blacks are competing with them for corporate positions and with their children for admission to medical school. Gershman calls such efforts divisive and diversionary:

> . . . all attention has been focused in the divisive and diversionary issue of racial entitlements while the Government has provided for the subsistence of the underclass with antipoverty allowances that have become increasingly expensive yet are inevitably branded as 'inadequate!! (105)

On the subject of Black leadership, Clark let his generation show by taking an unfortunate step into the past by distoring the history, ideology and goals of the Black Power movement. Then, just as Gershman implies that the best thing that could happen for the benefit of the Black underclass is for the Black middle-class to disappear, Clark implies that the best thing that could happen is to: eliminate the Black militants who oppose integration and espouse separatism; bring Martin Luther King, Jr., Whitney Young, and (believe it or not) Malcolm X back to life; and bring James Farmer and Roy Wilkens out of retirement. This is hardly a forward looking perspective.

Clark did redeem himself by countering Gershman's plea that the opponents of affirmative action, (like himself) are not racists. Clark began to grapple with the issues confronting Black leaders in the 1980's (what a relief to finally let the 1960's go). Clark

asserts that given the fact that the neo-conservatives of the 1980's are practicing a more sophisticated form of racism, Black leaders will need to deal with the new semantics of racism such as:

> racial code words as 'busing,' 'quotas,' 'reverse discrimination,' 'meritocracy' and 'maintaining' standards' -- shorthand terms implying that remedies for racial injustice will weaken the fiber of the society.

The most profound comment made by Clark in his response to Gershman was that a manifestation of racism is implicit in a white man being selected by the New York Times to write his analysis of the aspirations, conflicts and inconsistencies of Black Americans. when no such opportunity would be extended to a Black social scientist to evaluate whites. To take that point further, it is insulting enough to have a white man speaking for Black Americans, articulating their needs to the white power structure. However, in this instance, insult is added to injury in that Gershman purports to speak to Black Americans lecturing Black leaders on struggling against racism (that he incidentally does not believe exists).

This thinly disguised attack on the Black middle-class has been launched because the middle classes provide the leadership for the masses in the struggle of any oppressed people for liberation. The very fact that there is a very "articulate Black intelligentsia" that is in the vanguard of the Black struggle is a reflection of the extent to which the Black middle class also suffers the brunt of oppression in America.

Additionally, Black people have precipitated the stirrings of most of the now more militant ethnic groups and white women in this country precisely because a Black middle class has arisen and attempted to achieve upward mobility viat the "American myth."

The power structure recognizes that as the Black struggle goes, so goes the rest of the American oppressed community. So, this attack on the Black middle class is designed to "head Black people off at the pass."

The summary statement that can be made about Gershman is that he launches an attack upon Black leaders but outlines no plan or program (which we have reason to expect since he has been chosen, at least by the New York Times to be the spokesman for the Black "little man.") He, too takes an excursion into the past to celebrate Johnson and Moynihan who had "the answer". Then he returns to indict Black social scientists who are seeking to elucidate the culture of the ghetto and to explain how it functions. This he said is an effort to preserve the ghetto and manipulate it for their own ends. He maintains that the ghetto must be dissolved. However, he doesn't stipulate whether this should be achieved by using dynamite or an atomic bomb.

This debate is particularly relevant to raging issues in the educational arena. For the past twenty years, there has been an implicit assumption by social scientists and policy makers that the difficulties Black children have experienced in school are related to poverty and social class. Poor children of diverse ethnic groups were labeled "culturally deprived", and "disadvantaged" and treated in a homogeneous fashion in compensatory education programs.

In the late '70's a small group of Black scial scientists (Boykin, 1978; Simmons, 1979; Hale, 1980a, 1980b; and others) have suggested that enthicity may be as salient a factor in shaping the behavioral styles of Black children as social class. That is, there are aspects of the culture in which Black children grow and develop

that shape the way they approach academic tasks and behave in traditional academic settings. It is the thesis of this paper that when one considers the educational difficulties of Black lower income children, it is neither purely a matter of class or a matter of race, but a matter of culture which involves an interaction between the two.

W.E.B. DuBois described the Black person in America as possessing two "warring souls". On one hand, Black people are products of their Afro-American heritage and culture. On the other hand they are shaped by the demands of Euro-American culture.

There is a kind of "soulfulness" that characterizes Black culture. Black people transform every cultural mode they interact with: language, music, religion, art, dance, problem solving, sports, writing or any other area if human expression. The task of this paper is to describe aspects of this "soulfulness" that emerges through the Black family and to indicate its relationship to the adjustments that confront Black children in academic settings. As Wade Boykin has suggested:

> . . . perhaps we can facilitate the academic/task performance of the Black child if we increase the "soulfulness" of the academic task setting.

Characteristics of Black Families that Influence Childrearing

Afro-American culture seems to place a greater degree of emphasis upon affect than Anglo-American culture. The realms of feeling and affect and the cognitive processes arising from interpersonal relations may have important implications for Black people. Research suggests that Black people are a very emotional people. Some of these scholars (Dixon and Foster 1971; Lester, 1969) have suggested that the emotion-charged, people-oriented quality of

Black expression is a part of an African heritage.

There are research studies (Gitters, Black and Mostofsky, 1972; Newmeyer, 1970; Young 1970) that have found Black children to be more feeling-oriented, people-oriented and more proficient at non-verbal communication that white children.

Research (Young 1970) has suggested that white children are more object-oriented than Black children and Black children are more people-oriented than whites. There is greater social breadth in the Black family. That is, there are more children in the household, and there is an extended network of kin and para-kin that is supportive of the nuclear family. So whereas white children manipulate toys and objects and thereby discover properties and relationships, Black children explore their human environment. Instead of playing alone in a playpen with "tinker" toys, Black babies are passed lap to lap.

This affective orientation may be a critical factor that is overlooked in traditional educational settings. This society's educational system is very object oriented. Classrooms are filled with educational hardware and technology -- books, listening stations, learning centers, televisions, programmed instruction, learning kits and so forth. There seems to be a higher degree of compatibility between the experiences of white children at home and the expectations of the school. It also seems that some of the affective needs of Black children are not being met. The high degree of people orientation may account for the indifferentness with which some Black children regard books and devices. It may also explain why some teachers complain that Black children will not work inedpendently and cling to the teacher. I observed a classroom in which there

were children who would work only when older children assisted them individually. It may be that this is a cultural trait that may need to be acknowledged with the result being more human interaction in the learning process.

Another dimension of this affective orientation is the importance of the teacher-student interpersonal relationship. Rapport with the teacher in educational settings and rapport with the examiner in testing settings seems to be strongly related to academic performance for Black students and not very critical for whites. Zigler and others (Zigler and Butterfield, 1968; Zigler, Abelson, and Seitz, 1973) found that when a good rapport was established between an examiner during a standardized testing session, the Black children exhibited significantly superior test performance than when it was not. Such a difference was not found in the white middle-class sample.

Piestrup (1973) has catalogued some of the factors which create good rapport in the teacher-Black student interaction. She demonstrated that when those factors were present, they increased the reading proficiency of 1st grade Black pupils.

Related to the affective orientation is a proficiency in <u>non-verbal communication</u>.

It has been reported that there is a minimal amount of verbal exchange in lower-class families. Young observes that this is because of the abundance of communication in other forms. She observed people to look deeply into each other's eyes, not speaking, but seeming to communicate fully. She suggests that parents use this to impress a point in a child. It has been noted that Black people avoid meeting the eyes of whites and this has been interpreted

as a gesture of nonequality. However, Young suggests that it may instead be a gesture of noncommunicativeness, in view of the extensive communication through looking into the eyes within the Black group.

An educational implication of this difference in non-verbal communication is shown in a study conducted by Byers and Byers (1977). They analyzed films of a white teacher interacting with two white and two Black girls of nursery school age. One of the girls of each race was very active in trying to get the teacher's attention with different records of success. The white girl looked at the teacher 14 times, and was successful in catching the teacher's eye on 8 of these occasions. The Black girl tried the same thing 35 times, and was successful in 4 of these attempts. These differences could be interpreted as evidence of discrimination, but it could be the result of cultural differences in non-verbal communication. Analysis of the films showed that most of the Black girl's glances were at times when the teacher's attention was directed in such a way that she could not notice the attempt to get her attention through eye contact. The same was true in the affective area. The white girl seemed to sense when she could move next to the teacher, sit on her lap, and so on, without disrupting the activity. The Black girl's attempts were timed differently, suggesting that she and the teacher did not share the same set of expectations and understanding of the meaning of gestures.

This difference in non-verbal communication should be investigated further because it may have implications for the kinds of rewards and punishments Black children elicit from the environment.

Relational Cognitive Style

Rosalie Cohen (1969) has identified two contrasting styles of learning. One is called the analytical style and the other is the relational style. The analytical style seems to be typical of middle-class whites and the relational style seems to be typical of Blacks. These styles refer to differences in the methods of selecting and classifying information, behaving in a learning situation, and approaching learning tasks.

The school requires one specific approach to cognitive organization -- analytic (Cohen 1969). Pupils who have not developed these skills and those who function with a different cognitive style will not only be poor achievers in school, but will become worse as they move to higher grade levels.

Not only does the school reward the development of the analytic styles of processing information, but its overall ideology and environment reinforces behaviors associated with that style.

> Aspects of analytic style can be found in the requirements that the pupil learn to sit increasingly long periods of time, to concentrate alone on impersonal learning stimuli, and to observe and value organized time-allotment schedules. (830)

The differences between children who function with relational cognitive styles is so great that a child whose cognitive organization is relational is unlikely to be rewarded socially with grades regardless of his native ability, the depth of his information or his background of experience. In fact, he will probably be considered deviant and disruptive in the analytically oriented learning environment of the school. (83)

Cohen suggests further that children develop their cognitive styles based upon the socialization they receive in their family

and friendship groups. She analyzes that children who participate in structured families with what she calls "formal" styles of group organization have been observed to function with analytical cognitive style. Those children who live in more fluid families which she calls "shared-function" primary groups, are more likely to utilize relational cognitive styles. Coheb is suggesting intellectual implications for a characteristic of Black families described by Robert Hill (1970). Hill suggests that adaptability of family roles is a strength of Black families. The ability of family members to take on roles and responsibilities as they arise has permitted the Black family to perform its functions within numerous types of family forms.

Another characteristic of Black families that may affect the behavior of Black children in educational settings is an emphasis on willfulness/assertiveness/style. Black families value idiosyncratic behavior on the part of Black children. There is a strong emphasis upon personal expressiveness, spontaneity, and assertiveness. As was mentioned earlier in the discussion of self-concept development, this emphasis upon individual uniqueness/distinctiveness could be characterized as "style". There is a clear relationship between this characteristic and the relational learning style. Cohen suggests that these style users attend to the unique. Hilliard (1976) suggests that they would thrive in an educational setting that promotes freedom vs. rules; variation vs. standardization; creativity vs. conformity; flexibility vs. rigid order; novelty vs. regularity; uniqueness vs. normality; and improvision vs. precision.

It is no surprise that Cohen also feels that relational style users are the most creative in the arts.

Black children are exposed to a high degree of stimulation from the creative arts. They are surrounded with stimuli from: the visual arts such as -- posters, paintings and graffitti; the audio arts such as -- phonographs, radios, and tape players; the video arts such as -- televisions and films; and the fashion arts such as -- creative hairstyles, hats, scarves and a general orientation toward adornment of the body that grows out of the African heritage.

Another aspect of the creative arts are the performer styles that permeate the Black community. This expressiveness is seen in the behavior of Black preachers, athletes, singers, dancers, and is cultivated in individuals throughout the Black community. The Last Poets summed it up by declaring that all Black people "are actors". It is difficult to be Black and boring.

Young Black children learn the significance of perfecting performer roles at an early age. Lee Rainwater discusses Black preschool children's strategies for getting what they want.

> The children learn that they can gain attention by their ability to perform in expressive adult ways, by using the special Black language, by trying seriously to learn the current dances, by imitating hip and cool aspects of adult behavior. Young Black children learn from early childhood the expressive styles of their community.

Speech

Ann Piestrup (1973) conducted a study wherein she identified six techniques of 1st grade reading instruction that were utilized with children who speak a Black dialect. She found that the children had the highest proficiency when they were taught using the "Black Artful" approach. These children were taught by a Black teacher who was comfortable suing the dialect with the children. She also

spoke rhythmically, varied her intonation and engaged in verbal interplay with the children. This teacher combined a high degree of verbal rapport with high involvement with the lesson.

This study is compatible with the observation by Virginia Young (1970) who described a "contest" style of speech between Black mothers and children in which they volley rhythnically and the child is encouraged to be assertive and develop an individual style. Young also suggests that there is a distinctive manner by which Black mothers give directions for household tasks. She suggests that it approximates the call and response patterns found in Black music. (A mother's communication of directions in household tasks uses few words, and tasks for which she has to give instructions are broken down into small units with brief directions for each short task following on completion of the previous one).

Using rhythm in speech and engaging in verbal interplay by teachers of Black children may connect culturally with Black children who interact rhythmically with their mothers at home.

Sarah Michaels (1980) conducted an ethnographical study of sharing time in an urban first grade classroom with one-half Black and one-half white children. She emphasizes that the oral discourse skills of children are important precursers to their literary skills. She found a significant difference between the oral presentation styles of the Black and white children. The white children utilized a style that she calls topic-centered. This style was very compatible with the teacher's notion of a good sharing episode. The discourse of these white upper middle-class children tended to be tightly organized and centering on a single topic or series of closely related topics.

In contrast to the topic centered style, the lower income Black children, and particularly the Black girls, were far more likely to use what she calls a "topic-chaining" style, that is loosely structured talk which moved fluidly from topic to topic, primarily with accounts of personal relations. It was difficult for the teacher to follow the theme of the stories because she expected the narrative to focus on a single topic. These sharing turns gave the impression of having no beginning, middle or end and hence no point at all. The result was that the Black children seemed to "ramble on" about a series of commonplace occurrences.

With the white children who used a topic-centered style, the teacher was highly successful at picking up on the child's topic and expanding on it through her questions and comments. Her questions generally stimulated more elaborated focused talk on the same topic.

With many of the Black children, on the other hand, the teacher seemed to have difficulty identifying the topic and understanding where the talk was going. Therefore, her questions were often mistimed, stopping the child in the middle of a thought. Also, her questions were often inappropriate and seemed to throw the child off balance, interrupting his or her train of thought.

The teacher made several attempts to "teach" the children to select and stick with one topic. However, these attempts were confusing to the children. Her first strategy was to emphasize the notion of "importance". She stated that appropriate topics for sharing were events that were "really, really very important and sort of different". However, the children still had difficulty with this notion.

Later in the year the teacher tried emphasizing a new sharing principle which was that the children should tell about only one thing. However, the Black children still encountered difficulty in conforming to the topic-centered style.

Michaels noted that this narrative style is the same one identified in informal home conversations between selected children and their mothers as well as in conversations among peers outside the classroom. This observation supports previous research that suggests a conversational style that is a feature of Black culture.

Additionally, Michaels observed a Black instructional aide in the classroom who led sharing time on one occasion. Even though the aid was in general a less skilled teacher of reading and math than the regular teacher, during the sharing session she led, she was better able to pick up on the children's narrative intentions, ask them appropriate questions, and help them round out and organize their narrative accounts.

The problems the teacher had with the Black children seemed to stem from a cultural mismatch between the teacher and the child. Such mismatches over time resulted in the white children having more of an opportunity to participate in sharing time, receiving more practice, and feeling better about their oral exchanges with the teacher. In as much as sharing time develops skills which are useful when children begin to write topic-centered prose, this ethnic group difference in discourse style could lead to serious educational problems.

Movement and Stimulus Change

Harry Morgan (1976) suggests that Black infants are superior in all aspects of development when the mothers have adequate

prenatal care. He also points out that Black children are motorically precocious. They are more active and have physical energy to expend than white children. This physical precocity can be substantiated by the numbers of Black athletes who dominate the major sports in numbers that are far disproportionate to Black representation in the population.

Morgan maintains that the schools do not support the natural energy level of Black children. He suggests that Black children need an active environment for successful learning. He states that this is particularly true of lower-income children whose parents emphasize survival skills primarily rather than conformity, docility and quiet manners which is more typical of middle-class childrearing where upward mobility is sought.

Black children are described as entering school for the first time with excitement and enthusiasm. However, the school then crushes the freedom and creativity of the children who cannot channel their energy until given permission to release it. Consequently, Black children elicit more punishment and are labeled hyperactive more frequently because of their high motoric activity.

Wade Boykin (1977) suggests that the Black home environment provides an abundance of stimulation, intensity and variation. There is a relatively high noise level with television on a significant amount of time and constant stereophonic music in the environment. There are usually large numbers of people per living space and a number of a variety of activities. This has been analyzed as "over stimulation" and as creating "conceptual deafness" by some social scientists (Marans and Lourie, 1967; Goldman and Sanders, 1969; Wach, Uygiris and Hunt, 1971). However, Boykin suggests that

this Black stimulating home environment produces greater psychological and behavioral "verve" in Black children than children possess in a white middle-class setting. Exposure to more constant high and variable stimulation, he argues, has led to a higher chronic activation level. Therefore, Black children have an increased behavioral vibrancy and an increased psychological affinity for stimulus change and intensity.

It has been pointed out that schools are rather unstimulating and monotonous places to be (Silberman, 1970; Holt, 1964). Boykin suggests that factors like investigatory exploration, behavioral change, and novelty and variability have not been incorporated into the classroom. He suggests further, that the reason white children are more successful at academic tasks than Black children is that they have a greater tolerance for monotony in academic task presentation formats. They may not perform as well if they were faced with increasing levels of format variation and stimulation or if they were asked to utilize movement more in the learning process. On the other hand, perhaps Black children are not as successful in school because they are relatively more intolerant of montonous, boring tasks and the sterile unstimulating school environment.

Boykin concludes that affective stimulation and vervistic stimulation are necessary for the Black child to be motivated to achieve in an academic setting. He suggests that this is the reason why Black children become turned off by the sterile, boring school environment and seek other areas for achievement and expression. As quoted earlier, he suggests that "perhaps we can facilitate the academic/task performance of the Black child if we increawe the 'soulfulness' of the academic task setting."

This brings us back to the topic which we set forth earlier in this discussion -- what is soul? We, who share the spirituality of the Black experience know it and feel it. We can see the expression of Black culture in the behavioral styles of Black children. However, more research is needed to enable us to build bridges between the culture of the home and the schools.

Last section

Implications for Research with Black Children

The studies I have reviewed in this paper highlight a number of incompatibilities between the culture of the school and the culture of the home. Even though educational scholars, policy makers and practitioners give lip service to the fact that educators should "begin where the child is and carry him beyond," there has been little research to elucidate the culture of the Black child.

The alternative schools of the 1960's provided us with the only model for incorporating Black culture into the educational process. Unfortunately, transforming the settings and curricula of schools, that educate Black children to include the literature and history, music and philosophy of the Black world is only one dimension of Black culture. I have given the above examples of research that indicates that Black children may be experiencing severe learning disabilities because there are differences between the culture in which they grow and develop and the culture of the school.

My present work involves conducting a micro-analysis of Black culture that can yield those aspects of the Afro-American ethos that should be considered in the design of learning environments and the planning of learning experiences for Black children.

I have begun this quest for Black culture by interviewing women of Afro-American and Euro-American descent about childrearing and

contrasting their views. I am presently analyzing these data to identify values and orientations that may have been transmitted generationally, particularly as they are reflected in the behavior patterns of Black people.

Black educators and psychologists have only recently begun to explore Black culture to elucidate educational implications. However, the humanities contain a wealth of information that can assist in this line of inquiry. Initial support has been obtained (The A. Whitney Griswold Humanities Research Fund at Yale) for a study entitled: Black Culture and Socialization: Mechanisms and Meanings.

The purpose of this study is to create a bridge between the social sciences and the humanities. Some attempts have been made to extract information about Black culture from the social science literature. However, the vast majority of those studies have been generated by white social scientists. However, Black people (because of circumstances have been much more expressive in the creative arts. An analysis of these cultural artifacts may provide us with information about the meanings of Black culture (as it relates to socialization) from the perspective of the participants in that culture. This study is an examination of Afro-American music, art and literature for reflections of the contemporary urban, northern, working class Black experience. It is the intent of this project to refine presently inadequate conceptions of the urban Black experience so that social policy makers and educators can more effectively acknowledge and enhance cultural differences.

There is a need for more <u>basic</u> ethnographical research on the culture of Black children. It is easier to eliminate the weaknesses they experience in obtaining upward mobility in mainstream society

by building upon their strengths and abilities. When more is known and understood about their religious orientation, the way in which their extended family functions, these networks can be utilized in beginning to solve the problems they face.

Too often Americans have a "wonder drug" approach to social problems. There is a need for a greater insensitivity toward basic research on the development of Black children before programs are designed. Too many programs have been assembled overnight, imposed on communities and found ineffective ten years later. We need to engage in basic research as a first step in program development. I am reminded of the African proverb that says: "To move slowly is sometimes more advantageous than to go speedily." It is clear that we need action, but it is equally clear that we need informed social policy.

Implications for Educational Practitioners

The purpose of this paper is to describe a fledgling theoretical perspective on the impact of culture on the educative styles of Black children. It is a perspective that needs support by funding agencies and more workers in the vineyard to enable it to move from basic to applied research. It is not a curriculum guide or a "how-to kit". However, to the sensitive reader there are some insights that can be gleaned from the conceptualizations I have attempted to creat. Following are some tentative implications:

1. Black children grow and develop in a functional adaptive culture.

2. Black culture shapes the way they approach learning tasks and function in academic settings.

3. Black children learn best and reveal their competencies best in settings where they are emotionally comfortalbe and secure.

4. Black children need further research to elucidate their learning styles.

5. Black children need pedagogy that complements their learning styles.

6. Black children need assessment tools that identify giftedness, competency and handicap within the context of their culture.

7. Black children have high motivation to achieve, however, they need more information about the mechanisms by which they can realize those aspirations, particularly when it involves gaining access to new networks and skills.

8. Black children need support as they encounter a duality of socialization wherein they must negotiate the values and lifestyles of Black culture as they learn the behaviors that are necessary for upward mobility in mainstream American culture.

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